

REMARKS

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the pending application. The non-final Office Action dated June 7, 2010 has been received and its contents carefully reviewed.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the courtesies extended during the telephonic interview of September 14, 2010. We discussed the proposed claim amendments and the differences of the claimed invention over the cited references. Independent claim 1 has been further amended in a manner as suggested by the Examiner. The substance of the interview is presented below.

Claim 1 is hereby amended. Claim 5 has been previously canceled. New claim 32 is hereby added. No new matter was added. Accordingly, claims 1-4 and 6-32 are currently pending. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1-4, 6-7, 10 and 21-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,660,063 to Lee et al. (hereinafter “*Lee*”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,042,276 to Kamano et al. (hereinafter “*Kamano*”) further in view of JP 2005-253990A to Komori et al. (hereinafter “*Komori*”). *Office Action* at p. 3. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Independent claim 1, as amended, recites a combination of elements including, for example, “a filter case vertically mounted at a front portion of the outer case to be exposed to an outside of the washing machine such that a user directly accesses the filter case, wherein the filter case pivots on a lower end thereof hinged on the outer case, toward the outside of the washing machine; ...a drain filter disposed between a drain inlet and a drain outlet in the filter case, wherein the filter case contains the drain filter therein and the drain filter pivots along with the filter case toward the outside of the washing machine such that the user directly takes the filter out of the filter case.” Accordingly, a user can directly take the filter out of the filter case.

None of the cited references, alone or in combination, disclose or suggest at least these features. As acknowledged in the Office Action, *Lee* and *Kamano* fail to disclose a filter case that

pivots on a lower end thereof hinged on an outer case, toward the outside of a washing machine. *Office Action* at p. 5.

Furthermore, *Komori* fails to cure the deficiencies of *Lee* and *Kamano*. Although, the Office alleges that *Komori* teaches the filter case (where the filter and including the lid 101) which pivots on the lower end on the outer case, toward the outside of the washing machine, Applicants respectfully disagree because it appears the teachings of *Komori* have been misconstrued. *Komori* discloses a washing machine having a filter device 17 including a filter case 34, a cap 35, and a filter body 36, as shown in Figs. 3, 5-6, 15, and 19-20. The cap 35 is coupled to the filter body 36. The assembly of the cap 35 and the filter body 36 is inserted into the filter case 34. In addition, as shown in Figs. 1 and 2, the filter device 17 is accommodated in an opening and a recess which are formed in the housing 1 of the washing machine, and a lid 101 is provided on the housing 1 so as to close and open the opening and recess of the housing 1 which receive the filter device 17. More specifically, the lid 101 is merely configured to open or close the opening and recess by pivoting on a lower end thereof. Although the lid 101 is pivotable, it does not contain a filter case or a drain filter therein that can pivot with the lid 101. Actually, the lid 101 is a portion of the washing machine housing 1, which is separate from the filter device 17 (including the filter case 34) and merely serves to conceal or expose the filter device 17. Meanwhile, the filter case 34 and filter 36 are mounted horizontally and fixed within the interior of the housing 1, as seen in Figs. 3 and 5-6, and are not pivotable. Thus, *Komori* does not disclose or suggest, “a filter case vertically mounted at a front portion of the outer case to be exposed to an outside of the washing machine such that a user directly accesses the filter case, wherein the filter case pivots on a lower end thereof hinged on the outer case, toward the outside of the washing machine; ...a drain filter disposed between a drain inlet and a drain outlet in the filter case, wherein the filter case contains the drain filter therein and the drain filter pivots along with the filter case toward the outside of the washing machine such that the user directly takes the filter out of the filter case,” as claimed.

For at these reasons, independent claim 1 is not *prima facie* obvious and is patentable over the cited references. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of independent claim 1. Claims 2-4, 6-7, 10 and 21-31 depend

from and add further features to independent claim 1. It stands to reason that the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of these dependent claims should be withdrawn as well.

Claims 8-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Lee* in view *Kamano* and *Komori* further in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,997,292 to Lutes et al. (hereinafter “*Lutes*”). *Office Action* at p. 8. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claims 8 and 9 depend from and add further features to independent 1. As discussed above, *Lee*, *Kamano*, and *Komori* do not disclose or suggest, “a filter case vertically mounted at a front portion of the outer case to be exposed to an outside of the washing machine such that a user directly accesses the filter case, wherein the filter case pivots on a lower end thereof hinged on the outer case, toward the outside of the washing machine; ...a drain filter disposed between a drain inlet and a drain outlet in the filter case, wherein the filter case contains the drain filter therein and the drain filter pivots along with the filter case toward the outside of the washing machine such that the user directly takes the filter out of the filter case,” as claimed.

Furthermore, *Lutes* does not cure the deficiencies of *Lee*, *Kamano*, and *Komori*. *Lutes* discloses a lint trap 66 positioned in the exhaust duct and supported by the door frame 44. *See* col 4; lines 20-24. Therefore, *Lutes* does not disclose or suggest, “a filter case vertically mounted at a front portion of the outer case to be exposed to an outside of the washing machine such that a user directly accesses the filter case, wherein the filter case pivots on a lower end thereof hinged on the outer case, toward the outside of the washing machine; ...a drain filter disposed between a drain inlet and a drain outlet in the filter case, wherein the filter case contains the drain filter therein and the drain filter pivots along with the filter case toward the outside of the washing machine such that the user directly takes the filter out of the filter case.”

For at these reasons, claims 8 and 9, which depend from and add further features to claim 1, are not *prima facie* obvious and are patentable over the cited references. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of claims 8 and 9.

Claims 11-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Lee* in view of *Kamano* and *Komori* further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,645,732 to Daniels (hereinafter “*Daniels*”). *Office Action* at p. 10. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claims 11 and 12 depend from and add further features to independent 1. As discussed above, *Lee*, *Kamano*, and *Komori* do not disclose or suggest, “a filter case vertically mounted at a front portion of the outer case to be exposed to an outside of the washing machine such that a user directly accesses the filter case, wherein the filter case pivots on a lower end thereof hinged on the outer case, toward the outside of the washing machine; ...a drain filter disposed between a drain inlet and a drain outlet in the filter case, wherein the filter case contains the drain filter therein and the drain filter pivots along with the filter case toward the outside of the washing machine such that the user directly takes the filter out of the filter case,” as claimed.

Furthermore, *Daniels* fails to cure the deficiencies of *Lee*, *Kamano* and *Komori*. *Daniels* discloses a U-shaped filter suspended from a T-fitting. Thus, *Daniels* does not disclose or suggest, “a filter case vertically mounted at a front portion of the outer case to be exposed to an outside of the washing machine such that a user directly accesses the filter case, wherein the filter case pivots on a lower end thereof hinged on the outer case, toward the outside of the washing machine; ...a drain filter disposed between a drain inlet and a drain outlet in the filter case, wherein the filter case contains the drain filter therein and the drain filter pivots along with the filter case toward the outside of the washing machine such that the user directly takes the filter out of the filter case.”

For at these reasons, claims 11 and 12, which depend from and add further features to claim 1, are not *prima facie* obvious and are patentable over the cited references. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of claims 11 and 12.

Claims 13-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Lee* in view of *Kamano* and *Komori* further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,702,592 to Suri et al. (hereinafter “*Suri*”). *Office Action* at p. 10..

Claims 13-18 depend from and add further features to independent 1. As discussed above, *Lee*, *Kamano*, and *Komori* do not disclose or suggest, “a filter case vertically mounted at a front

portion of the outer case to be exposed to an outside of the washing machine such that a user directly accesses the filter case, wherein the filter case pivots on a lower end thereof hinged on the outer case, toward the outside of the washing machine; ...a drain filter disposed between a drain inlet and a drain outlet in the filter case, wherein the filter case contains the drain filter therein and the drain filter pivots along with the filter case toward the outside of the washing machine such that the user directly takes the filter out of the filter case,” as claimed.

Furthermore, *Suri* fails to cure the deficiencies of *Lee*, *Kamano* and *Komori*. *Suri* is directed to a device that provides continuous monitoring of a pressure differential across a filter medium. *See* col. 2; lines 54-59. Thus, *Suri* does not disclose or suggest, “a filter case vertically mounted at a front portion of the outer case to be exposed to an outside of the washing machine such that a user directly accesses the filter case, wherein the filter case pivots on a lower end thereof hinged on the outer case, toward the outside of the washing machine; ...a drain filter disposed between a drain inlet and a drain outlet in the filter case, wherein the filter case contains the drain filter therein and the drain filter pivots along with the filter case toward the outside of the washing machine such that the user directly takes the filter out of the filter case.”

For at these reasons, claims 13-18, which depend from and add further features to claim 1, are not *prima facie* obvious and are patentable over the cited references. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of claims 13-18.

Claims 19-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Lee*, *Kamano*, *Komori* and *Suri* further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,702,592 to Choi (hereinafter “*Choi*”). *Office Action* at p. 11.

Claims 19 and 20 depend from and add further features to independent 1. As discussed above, *Lee*, *Kamano*, *Komori* and *Suri* do not disclose or suggest, “a filter case vertically mounted at a front portion of the outer case to be exposed to an outside of the washing machine such that a user directly accesses the filter case, wherein the filter case pivots on a lower end thereof hinged on the outer case, toward the outside of the washing machine; ...a drain filter disposed between a drain inlet and a drain outlet in the filter case, wherein the filter case contains the drain filter therein and

the drain filter pivots along with the filter case toward the outside of the washing machine such that the user directly takes the filter out of the filter case,” as claimed.

Furthermore, *Choi* fails to cure the deficiencies of *Lee*, *Kamano*, *Komori* and *Suri*. *Choi* is directed to a door lock assembly of a drum washing machine. Thus, *Choi* does not disclose or suggest, “a filter case vertically mounted at a front portion of the outer case to be exposed to an outside of the washing machine such that a user directly accesses the filter case, wherein the filter case pivots on a lower end thereof hinged on the outer case, toward the outside of the washing machine; ...a drain filter disposed between a drain inlet and a drain outlet in the filter case, wherein the filter case contains the drain filter therein and the drain filter pivots along with the filter case toward the outside of the washing machine such that the user directly takes the filter out of the filter case.”

For at these reasons, claims 19 and 20, which depend from and add further features to claim 1, are not *prima facie* obvious and are patentable over the cited references. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of claims 19 and 20.

Other Matters

New claim 32 has been added. Claim 32 depends from and add further features to independent claim 1. As discussed above, none of the cited references disclose or suggest, “a filter case vertically mounted at a front portion of the outer case to be exposed to an outside of the washing machine such that a user directly accesses the filter case, wherein the filter case pivots on a lower end thereof hinged on the outer case, toward the outside of the washing machine; ...a drain filter disposed between a drain inlet and a drain outlet in the filter case, wherein the filter case contains the drain filter therein and the drain filter pivots along with the filter case toward the outside of the washing machine such that the user directly takes the filter out of the filter case.”

For at these reasons, claim 32 is patentable over the cited references. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request allowance of claim 32.

CONCLUSION

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at (202) 496-7500 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. §1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0911.

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